

Editorial

Welcome to Kunming!

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On behalf of the Steering Committee for the Fourth Biennial Conference of the International Association for Ecology and Health, I would like to dedicate this issue of *EcoHealth* to the conference.

China's growth as a global economic power provides a critical backdrop to the Kunming conference. As we have grown and opened up our trade globally over the past four decades, we have seen first-hand the connectedness of environment, health and development. Our country has suffered outbreaks of newly emerging diseases such as SARS and H5N1 avian influenza. We have experienced drought and sometimes heavy pollution. And our population has

continued to grow, putting pressure on social development and health programs.

Ecohealth research is conducted throughout the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) laboratories and institutes in China. Here at the Kunming Institute of Botany (CAS), we work on all aspects of ecohealth. We have improved crop plants, conducted biological surveys, and worked on different disease systems.

However, with this meeting, for the first time China is able to focus on the transdisciplinary field of ecohealth per se. We will hear about how social development, health and the environment are connected, and a hundred ways that we may use this to improve our future. In China, our continued rapid growth makes this critical, but I would say to you, delegates of the Kunming meeting, and readers of *EcoHealth* across the world, that it is our unique collaborations across borders and among disciplines that make *EcoHealth* in China such a bright future.

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